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Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
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Reports by divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the situation in their divisions and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference.

Report of the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia (activity between 2003 - 2007)

Submitted by the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia**

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Summary

The Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names formed by a resolution of the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names includes the experts from 10 permanent country-members: Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia are working in the Division as observers.

The report informs on the Division's meetings held between 2003 and 2007. At the meetings the experts discussed a current status of the national and international standardization of geographical names, development of the national databases of geographical names, development and application of the national Romanization systems. It was mentioned that the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia works in cooperation with the Baltic Division and the Working Group of the Interstate Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Remote Control of the Earth of the CIS states-members.

A resolution to establish the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia in the UN Group of Experts was adopted at the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in New York, August 25 – September 3. Currently the Division includes the experts from 10 permanent country-members: Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia are working in the Division as observers.

Between 2003 and 2007 the experts of the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia held three regional meetings: in March 2004 (Russia), May 2005 and in October 2006 (Ukraine). At the meetings the experts discussed:

- current status of national and international standardization of geographical names;
- current status of the legislative and normative base for the use of geographical names;
- development and application of the national Romanization systems for geographical names;
- results of the 8th UN Conference on the standardization of geographical names (2002), 21st (2002), 22nd (2004) and 23rd (2006) sessions of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names attended by the experts of the Division.

It was decided to hold the next meeting of the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia in the first half of 2008 in Bulgaria. The meeting will be devoted to the results of the 24th session of the UN Group of Experts and 9th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. It is also planned to adopt a program for a future cooperation and elect the Division's officials (Chairman and Vice Chairman) for coming five years.

The Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia worked in regular cooperation with the Baltic Division of the UN Group of Experts. The experts from the Baltic Division were invited as observers to the meeting of the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia and in their turn the experts from the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia participated in the meetings arranged by the Baltic Division.

Many countries from the Division of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia take part in the work of the Working Group on Geographical Names of the established by the Interstate Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Remote Control of the Earth of the CIS state-members. Its main objective is to provide a regular exchange of information about renaming and other changes in geographical names. The cooperation in the field resulted in a compilation and issue of the Information Bulletin "Changes in the geographical names in the CIS countries".